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T O Y - S H O P .

By MR ROBERT DODSLEY.

DRAMATIS PRRSONÆ.

M E N .

					<i>Covent-Garden.</i>
	Master of the Shop,	-	-	-	Mr Chapman.
1	} Gentlemen,	-	-	-	Mr Bridgewater.
2		-	-	-	Mr Wignell.
3		-	-	-	Mr Hallam.
4		-	-	-	Mr Hale.
	Beau,	-	-	-	Mr Neale.
1	} Old Man,	-	-	-	Mr James.
2		-	-	-	Mr Hippesley.

W O M E N .

1	} Lady,	-	-	-	Mrs Eullock,
2		-	-	-	Mrs Norris.
3		-	-	-	Mrs Mullart.
4		-	-	-	Miss Binks.

I N T R O D U C T I O N .

Enter a Gentleman and two Ladies.

GENTLEMAN.

AND you never have been at this extraordinary toy-shop, you say, Madam?

La. No, Sir: I have heard of the man, indeed; but most people say he's a very impertinent silly fellow.

Gent. That's because he sometimes tells them of their faults.

La. And that's sufficient. I should think any man imper-

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impertinent that should pretend to tell me of my faults, if they did not concern him.

Gent. Yes, Madam; but people that know him take no exceptions. And really, tho' some may think him impertinent, in my opinion he's very entertaining.

2 La. Pray, who is the man your are talking of? I never heard of him.

Gent. He's one who has lately fet up a toy-shop, Madam; and is, perhaps, the most extraordinary person in his way that ever was heard of. He is a general satirist, yet not rude or ill-natur'd. He has got a custom of moralizing upon every trifle he sells; and will strike a lesson or instruction out of a snuff-box, a thimble, or a cockle-shell.

1 La. Isn't he craz'd?

Gent. Madam, he may be call'd a humorist; but does not want sence, I do assure you.

2 La. Methinks I should be glad to see him.

Gent. I dare say you will be very much diverted. And if you'll give me leave, I'll wait on you. I'm particularly acquainted with him.

2 La. What say you, Madam, shall we go?

1 La. I can't help thinking he's a coxcomb; however, to satisfy my curiosity, I don't care if I do.

Gent. I believe the coach is at the door.

2 La. I hope he won't affront us.

Gent. He won't designedly, I'm sure, Madam.

[*Exeunt.*]

The SCENE opens and discovers the toy-shop; the Master standing behind the counter, looking over his books.

MASTER.

METHINKS I have had a tolerable good day of it to-day. A gold-watch, five-and-thirty guineas—
—Let me see—What did that watch stand me in?
—* Where is it? O here—Lent to Lady Basset
eighteen guineas upon her gold watch. Ay, she died

D 3

and

* Turning to another book backwards and forwards.

and never redeem'd it—A set of old china, five pounds.—Bought of an old-cloaths man for five shillings. Right. A curious shell for a snuff-box, two guineas.—Bought of a poor fisherboy for a halfpenny. Now, if I had offered that shell for sixpence, nobody would have bought it. Well, thanks to the whimsical extravagance and folly of mankind. I believe, from these childish toys, and gilded baubles, I shall pick up a comfortable maintenance. For really, as it is a trifling age, so nothing but trifles are valued in it. Men read none but trifling authors; pursue none but trifling amusements; and contend for none but trifling opinions. A trifling fellow is prefer'd; a trifling woman admir'd. Nay, as if there were not real trifles enow, they make trifles of the most serious and valuable things. Their time, their health, their money, their reputation, are trifled away. Honesty is become a trifle, conscience a trifle, honour a mere trifle, and religion the greatest trifle of all.

Enter the Gentleman and two Ladies.

Mast. Sir, your humble servant; I'm very glad to see you.

Gent. Sir, I am your's. I have brought you some customers here.

Mast. You are very good, Sir. What do you please to want, Ladies?

1 *La.* Please to want! People seldom please to want any thing, Sir.

Mast. O dear, Madam, yes; I always imagine when people come into a toy-shop, it must be for something they please to want.

2 *La.* Here is a mighty pretty looking-glass: pray, Sir, what's the price of it?

Mast. This looking-glass, Madam, is the finest in all England. In this glass a coquette may see her vanity, and a prude her hypocrisy. Some ladies may see more beauty than modesty, more airs than graces, and more wit than good-nature.

1 *La.* [*Aside*] He begins already.

Mast. If a beau was to buy this glass, and look earnestly into it, he might see his folly almost as soon as his finery. 'Tis true, some people may not see their generosity in it, nor others their charity; yet it is a very clear glass.

glafs. Some fine gentlemen may not fee their good-manners in it, perhaps, nor some persons their religion; yet it is a very clear glafs. In fhort, tho' every one that paffes for a maid fhould not happen to fee a virgin in it, yet it may be a very clear glafs, you know, for all that.

2 La. Yes, Sir; but I did not ask you the virtues of it: I ask'd you the price.

Maf. It was neceffary to tell you the virtues, Madam, in order to prevent you fcrupling the price, which is five guineas; and for fo extraordinary a glafs, in my opinion, it is but a trifle.

2 La. Lord, I'm afraid to look into it, methinks, left it fhould fhew me more of my faults than I care to fee.

1 La. Pray, Sir, what can be the ufe of this very diminutive piece of goods here?

Maf. This box, Madam! In the firft place, it is a very great curiofity, being the leaft box that ever was feen in England.

1 La. Then a very little curiofity had been more proper.

Maf. Right, Madam. Yet, would you think it? in this fame little box, a courtier may deposite his fincerity, a lawyer may fcrew up his honefty, and a poet may—hoard his money.

Gent. Ha! ha! I will make a prefent of it to Mr Stanza for the very fame purpofe.

2 La. Here's a fine perfpective. Now, I think, Madam, in the country, thefe are a very pretty amufement.

Maf. Oh, Madam, the moft ufeful and diverfing things imaginable, either in town and country. The nature of this glafs, Madam, (pardon my impertinence in pretending to tell you, what, to be fure, you are as well acquainted with as myfelf), is this: If you look thro' it at this end, every object is magnified, brought near, and difcern'd with the greateft plainnefs; but turn it the other way, do you fee, and they are all leffen'd, caft at a great diftance, and rendered almoft imperceptible. Thro' this end it is that we look at our own faults; but when other people are to be examined, we are ready enough to turn the other. Thro' this end are view'd all the benefits and advntages we at any time receive from others;

but

but if ever we happen to confer any, they are sure to be shown in their greatest magnitude thro' the other. Thro' this end we enviously darken and contract the virtue, the merit, the beauty, of all the world around us; but fondly compliment our own with the most agreeable and advantageous light thro' the other.

2 *La.* Why, Sir, methinks you are a new kind of satirical parson; your shop is your scripture, and every piece of goods a different text, from which you expose the vices and follies of mankind in a very fine allegorical sermon.

Mast. Right, Madam, right; I thank you for the simile. I may be call'd a parson indeed, and am a very good one in my way. I take delight in my calling, and am never better pleas'd than to see a full congregation. Yet it happens to me, as it does to most of my brethren, people sometimes vouchsafe to take home the text perhaps, but mind the sermon no more than if they had not heard one.

1 *La.* Why, Sir, when a short text has more in it than a long sermon, 'tis no wonder if they do.

Enter a third Lady.

3 *La.* Pray, Sir, let me look at some of your little dogs.

2 *La.* [*Aside.*] Little dogs! My stars! how cheaply some people are entertained! Well, 'tis a sign human conversation is grown low and insipid, whilst that of dogs and monkeys is preferr'd to it.

Mast. Here are very beautiful dogs, Madam. These dogs, when they were alive, were some of them the greatest dogs of their age. I don't mean the largest, but dogs of the greatest quality and merit.

1 *La.* I love a dog of merit dearly: Has not he a dog of honour too, I wonder? [*Aside.*]

Mast. Here's a dog, now, that never eat but upon plate or china, nor set his foot but upon a carpet or a cushion. Here's one, too; this dog belonged to a lady of as great beauty and fortune as any in England; he was her most intimate friend and particular favourite; and upon that account has received more compliments, more respect, and more addressees, than a first minister of state. Here's another, which was, doubtless, a dog of singular

singular worth and great importance, since at his death one of the greatest families in the kingdom were all in tears, received no visits for the space of a week, but shut themselves up, and mourn'd their loss with inconsolable sorrow. This dog, while he liv'd, either for contempt of his person, neglect of his business, or saucy and impertinent behaviours in their attendance on him, had the honour of turning away upwards of thirty servants. He died at last of a cold caught by following one of the maids into a damp room; for which she lost her place, her wages, and her character.

3 *La.* O the careless, wicked wretch! I wou'd have had her try'd for murder at least. That, that is just my case! The sad relation revives my grief so strongly, I cannot contain. Lucy, bring in the box. † See! see! the charming creature here lies dead! Its precious life is gone! Oh, my dear Chloe, no more wilt thou lie hugg'd in my warm bosom! no more will that sweet tongue lick o'er my face, nor that dear mouth eat dainty bits from mine. Oh, death! what hast thou robb'd me of?

Gent. [*Aside.*] A proper object to display your folly!

Mast. Pray, Madam, moderate your grief; you ought to thank Heaven 'tis not your husband.

3 *La.* Oh, what is husband, father, mother, son, to my dear precious Chloe!—No, no, I cannot live without the sight of his dear image; and if you cannot make me the exact effigies of this poor dead creature, I must never hope to see one happy day in life.

Mast. Well, Madam, be comforted, I will do it to your satisfaction. [*Taking the box.*]

3 *La.* Let me have one look more. Poor creature! O cruel fate, that dogs are born to die!

[*Exit weeping.*]

Gent. What a scene is here! Are not the real and unavoidable evils of life sufficient, that people thus create to themselves imaginary woes?

Mast. These, Sir, are the griefs of those who have no other

† Here her maid enters, and delivers a box, from which the lady pulls out a dead dog, kissing it, and weeping. Lucy too pretends great sorrow; but turning aside, bursts out a-laughing, and cries, "She little thinks I poison'd it."

other. Did they once truly feel the real miseries of life, ten thousand dogs might die without a tear.

Enter a second Gentleman.

2 Gent. I want an ivory pocket-book.

Mast. Do you please to have it with directions or without?

2 Gent. Directions! What, how to use it?

Mast. Yes, Sir.

2 Gent. I should think every man's own business his best direction.

Mast. It may be so. Yet there are some general rules which it equally behoves every man to be acquainted with. As for instance: Always to make a memorandum of the benefits you receive from others; always to set down the faults or failings which from time to time you discover in yourself. And if you remark any thing that is ridiculous or faulty in others, let it not be with an ill-natur'd design to hurt or expose them at any time, but with a *nota bene*, that it is only for a caution to yourself not to be guilty of the like. With a great many other rules of such a nature, as makes one of my pocket-books both an useful monitor, and a very entertaining companion.

2 Gent. And pray, what's the price of one of them?

Mast. The price is a guinea, Sir.

2 Gent. That's very dear. But as it is a curiosity—
[*Pays for it, and exit.*]

Enter a Beau.

Beau. Pray, Sir, let me see some of your handsomest snuff-boxes.

Mast. Here is a plain gold one, Sir, a very neat box; here's a gold enamell'd; here's a silver one neatly carv'd and gilt; here's a curious shell, Sir, set in gold.

Beau. Damn your shells; there's not one of them fit for a gentleman to put his fingers into. I want one with some pretty device on the inside of the lid; something that may serve to joke upon, or help one to an occasion to be witty, that is, smutty, now and then.

Mast. And are witty and smutty then synonymous terms?

Beau. O dear, Sir, yes; a little decent smut is the very life of all conversation: 'tis the wit of drawing-rooms,

rooms, assemblies, and tea-tables; 'tis the smart raillery of fine gentlemen, and the innocent freedom of fine ladies; 'tis a *double entendre*, at which the coquette laughs, the prude looks grave, the modest blush, but all are pleased with.

Mast. That it is the wit and entertainment of all conversation, I believe, Sir, may possibly be a mistake. 'Tis true, those who are so rude as to use it in all conversations, may possibly be so depraved themselves, as to fancy every body else as agreeably entertained in hearing it as they are in uttering it: But I dare say, any man or woman, of real virtue and modesty, has as little taste for such ribaldry, as those coxcombs have for what is good sense or true politeness.

Beau. Good sense, Sir! Damme, Sir, what do you mean? I wou'd have you think I know good sense as well as any man. Good sense is a true—a right—a—a—a—Damn it, I scorn to be so pedantic as to make definitions: but I can invent a cramp oath, Sir; drink a smutty health, Sir; ridicule priests, laugh at all religion, and make such a grave prig as you look just like a fool, Sir. Now, damme, I take that to be good sense.

Mast. And I, unmov'd, can hear such senseless ridicule, and look upon its author with an eye of pity and contempt. And I take this to be good sense.

Beau. Psha, psha, damn'd hypocrisy and affectation, nothing else, nothing else. [Exit.

Mast. There is nothing so much my aversion as a coxcomb. They are a ridicule upon human nature, and make one almost ashamed to be of the same species: and for that reason I can't forbear affronting them whenever they fall in my way. I hope the ladies will excuse such behaviour in their presence.

2 *La.* Indeed, Sir, I wish we had always somebody to treat them with such behaviour in our presence. 'Twould be much more agreeable than their impertinence.

Enter a young Gentleman.

3 *Gent.* I want a plain gold ring, Sir, exactly this size.

Mast. Then it is not for yourself, Sir?

3 *Gent.*

3 *Gent.* No.

Mast. A wedding-ring, I presume.

3d *Gent.* No, Sir; I thank you kindly; that's a toy I never design to play with. 'Tis the most dangerous piece of goods in your whole shop. People are perpetually doing themselves a mischief with it. They hang themselves fast together first; and afterwards are ready to hang themselves separately, to get loose again.

1 *La.* This is but a fashionable cant. I'll be hang'd if this pretended railer at matrimony is not just upon the point of making some poor woman miserable. [*Aside.*]

3 *Gent.* Well—happy are we whilst we are children; we can then lay down one toy and take up another, and please ourselves with variety: but growing more foolish as we grow older, there's no toy will please us then but a wife; and that indeed, as 'tis a toy for life, so it is all toys in one. She is a rattle in a man's ears, which he cannot throw aside; a drum which is perpetually beating him a point of war; a top which he ought to whip for his exercise, for, like that, she is best when lash'd to sleep; a hobby-horse for the booby to ride on when the maggot takes him; a—

Mast. You may go on, Sir, in this ludicrous strain, if you please, and fancy 'tis wit; but, in my opinion, a good wife is the greatest blessing, and the most valuable possession, that heaven, in this life, can bestow: she makes the cares of the world sit easy, and adds a sweetness to its pleasures; she is a man's best companion in prosperity, and his only friend in adversity; the carefullest preserver of his health, and the kindest attendant on his sickness; a faithful adviser in distress, a comforter in affliction, and a prudent manager of all his domestic affairs.

2 *La.* Charming doctrine! [*Aside.*]

3 *Gent.* Well, Sir, since I find you so staunch an advocate for matrimony, I confess 'tis a wedding-ring I want: the reason why I deny'd it, and of what I said in ridicule of marriage, was only to avoid the ridicule which I expected from you upon it.

Mast. Why, that now is just the way of the world in every thing, especially amongst young people. They are ashamed to do a good action, because it is not a fashionable

shionable one; and, in compliance with custom, act contrary to their own conscience. They displease themselves, to please the coxcombs of the world; and choose rather to be objects of divine wrath, than human ridicule.

3 *Gent.* 'Tis very true, indeed. There is not one man in ten thousand that dare be virtuous, for fear of being singular. 'Tis a weakness which I have hitherto been too much guilty of myself; but for the future I am resolv'd upon a more steady rule of action.

Mast. I am very glad of it. Here's your ring, Sir; I think it comes to about a guinea.

3 *Gent.* There's the money.

Mast. Sir, I wish you all the joy that a good wife can give you.

3 *Gent.* I thank you, Sir.

[*Exit.*

1 *La.* Well, Sir; but, after all, don't you think marriage a kind of desperate venture.

Mast. It is a desperate venture, Madam, to be sure: but, provided there be a tolerable share of sense and discretion on the man's part, and of mildness and condescension on the woman's, there is no danger of leading as happy and comfortable a life in that state as in any other.

Enter a fourth Lady.

4 *La.* I want a mask, Sir; have you got any?

Mast. No, Madam, I have not one indeed. The people of this age are arriv'd to such perfection in the art of masking themselves, that they have no occasion for any foreign disguises at all. You shall find infidelity mask'd in a gown and cassock; and wantonness and immodesty under a blushing countenance. Oppression is veil'd under the name of justice; and fraud and cunning under that of wisdom. The fool is mask'd under an affected gravity; and the vilest hypocrite under the greatest professions of sincerity. The flatterer passes upon you under the air of a friend; and he that now hugs you in his bosom, for a shilling would cut your throat. Calumny and detraction impose themselves upon the world for wit; and an eternal laugh would fain be thought good nature. An humble demeanour is assumed from a principle of pride; and the wants of the indigent relieved

ved out of ostentation. In short, worthlessness and villainy are oft disguised and dignified in gold and jewels, whilst honesty and merit lie hid under rags and misery. The whole world is in a mask; and it is impossible to see the natural face of any one individual.

4 *La.* That's a mistake, Sir; you yourself are an instance that no disguise will hide a coxcomb; and so your humble servant. [*Exit.*

Mast. Humph!—Have I but just now been exclaiming against coxcombs, and am I accused of being one myself? Well—we can none of us see the ridiculous parts of our own characters. Could we but once learn to criticise ourselves, and to find out and expose to ourselves our own weak sides, it would be the surest means to conceal them from the criticism of others. But I would fain hope I am not a coxcomb, methinks, whatever I am else.

Gent. I suppose you have said something which her conscience would not suffer her to pass over without making the ungrateful application to herself; and that, as it often happens, instead of awaking in her a sense of her fault, has only served to put her in a passion.

Mast. May be so, indeed; at least I am willing to think so.

Enter an Old Man.

O. M. I want a pair of spectacles, Sir.

Mast. Do you please to have them plain tortoise-shell, or set in gold or silver?

O. M. Pho! Do you think I buy spectacles as your fine gentlemen buy books? If I wanted a pair of spectacles only to look *at*, I would have 'em fine ones; but as I want them to look *with*, do you see, I'll have them good ones.

Mast. Very well, Sir. Here's a pair I'm sure will please you. Through these spectacles all the follies of youth are seen in their true light. Those vices which to the strongest youthful eyes appear in characters scarce legible, are thro' these glasses discern'd with the greatest plainness. A powder'd wig upon an empty head attracts no more respect through these optics than a greasy cap; and the laced coat of a coxcomb seems altogether as contemptible as his footman's livery.

O. M.

O. M. That indeed is showing things in their true light.

Mast. The common virtue of the world appears only a cloak for knavery, and its friendships no more than bargains of self-interest. In short, he who is now passing away his days in a constant round of vanity, folly, intemperance, and extravagance, when he comes seriously to look back upon his past actions thro' these undisguising optics, will certainly be convinced, that a regular life, spent in the study of truth and virtue, and adorn'd with acts of justice, generosity, charity, and benevolence, would not only have afforded him more delight and satisfaction in the present moment, but would likewise have raised to his memory a lasting monument of fame and honour.

O. M. Humph! 'Tis very true; but very odd that such serious ware should be the commodity of a toy-shop. [*Aside.*] Well, Sir, and what's the price of these extraordinary spectacles?

Mast. Half-a-crown.

O. M. There's your money.

[*Exit.*]

Enter a fourth young Gentleman.

4 Gent. I want a pair of scales.

Mast. You shall have them, Sir.

4 Gent. Are they exactly true?

Mast. The very emblem of justice, Sir; a hair will turn them.

[*Balancing the scales.*]

4 Gent. I would have them true, for they must determine some very nice statical experiments.

Mast. I'll engage they shall justly determine the nicest experiments in statics. I have try'd them myself in some uncommon subjects, and have prov'd their goodness. I have taken a large handful of great mens promises, and put into one end; and lo! the breath of a fly in the other has kick'd up the beam. I have seen four peacocks feathers, and the four gold clocks in Lord Tawdry's stockings, suspend the scales in equilibrio. I have found by experience, that the learning of a beau, and the wit of a pedant, are a just counterpoise to each other; that the pride and vanity of any man are in exact proportion to his ignorance; that a grain of good-nature will preponderate against an ounce of wit; a heart full of

virtue, against a head-full of learning; and a thimble-full of content, against a chest-full of gold.

4 *Gent.* This must be a very pretty science, I fancy.

Mast. It would be endless to enumerate all the experiments that might be made in these scales: but there is one which every one ought to be apprized of; and that is, that a moderate fortune, enjoy'd with content, freedom, and independency, will turn the scales against whatever can be put in the other end.

4 *Gent.* Well, this is a branch of statics which, I must own, I had but little thoughts of entering into. However, I begin to be persuaded, that to know the true specific gravity of this kind of subjects is of infinitely more importance than that of any other bodies in the universe.

Mast. It is indeed. And that you may not want encouragement to proceed in so useful a study, I will let you have the scales for ten shillings. If you make a right use of them, they will be worth more to you than ten thousand pounds.

4 *Gent.* I confess I am struck with the beauty and usefulness of this kind of moral statics, and believe I shall apply myself to make experiments with great delight. There's your money, Sir: You shall hear shortly what discoveries I make; in the mean time, I am your humble servant. [Exit.

Mast. Sir, I am your's.

Enter a second Old Man.

2 *O. M.* Sir, I understand you deal in curiosities. Have you any thing in your shop at present that's pretty and curious?

Mast. Yes, Sir, I have a great many things: but the most ancient curiosity I have got, is a small brass plate, on which is engrav'd the speech which Adam made to his wife on their first meeting, together with her answer. The characters, through age, are grown unintelligible: but for that 'tis the more to be valued. What is remarkable in this ancient piece is, that Eve's speech is about three times as long as her husband's. I have a ram's horn, one of those which helped to blow down the walls of Jericho. A lock of Samson's hair, tied up in a shred of Joseph's garment. With several other Jewish antiquities, which

which I purchas'd of that people at a very great price. Then I have the tune which Orpheus play'd to the devil when he charm'd back his wife.

Gent. That was thought to be a silly tune, I believe, for nobody has ever car'd to learn it.

Mast. Close cork'd up in a thumb-phial, I have some of the tears which Alexander wept because he could do no more mischief. I have a snuff-box made out of the tub in which Diogenes lived, and took snuff at all the world. I have the net in which Vulcan caught his spouse and her gallant; but our modern wives are grown so exceeding chaste, that there has not been an opportunity of casting it these many years.

Gent. Some would be so malicious, as, instead of chaste, to think he meant cunning. [*Aside to the ladies.*]

Mast. I have the pitch-pipe of Gracchus the Roman orator; who being apt, in dispute, to raise his voice too high, by touching a certain soft note in this pipe, would regulate and keep it in a moderate key.

2 La. Such a pipe as that, if it could be heard, would be very useful in coffee-houses, and other public places of debate and modern disputation.

Gent. Yes, Madam; and I believe many a poor husband would be glad of such a regulator of the voice in his own private family too.

Mast. There you was even with her, Sir.—But the most valuable curiosity I have, is a certain little tube, which I call a distinguisher; contriv'd with such art, that when rightly applied to the ear, it obstructs all falsehood, nonsense, and absurdity, from striking upon the tympanum: nothing but truth and reason can make the least impression upon the auditory nerves. I have sat in a coffee-house sometimes for the space of half an hour, and amongst what is generally called the best company, without hearing a single word. At a dispute too, when I could perceive, by the eager motions of both parties, that they made the greatest noise, I have enjoyed the most profound silence. It is a very useful thing to have about one, either at church, play-house, or Westminster-hall; at all which places a vast variety both of useful and diverting experiments may be made with it. The only inconvenience attending it is, that no man can make him-

self a complete master of it under twenty years close and diligent practice. And that term of time is best commenced at ten or twelve years old.

Gent. That, indeed, is an inconvenience that will make it not every body's money. But one would think those parents, who see the beauty and the usefulness of knowledge, virtue, and a distinguishing judgment, should take particular care to engage their children early in the use and practice of such a distinguisher, whilst they have time before them, and no other concerns to interrupt their application.

Mast. Some few do. But the generality are so entirely taken up with the care of little Master's complexion, his dress, his dancing, and such like effeminacies, that they have not the least regard for any internal accomplishments whatsoever; and are so far from teaching him to subdue his passions, that they make it their whole business to gratify them all.

O. M. Well, Sir; to some people, these may be thought curious things, perhaps, and a very valuable collection. But, to confess the truth, these are not the sort of curious things I wanted. Have you no little box, representing a wounded heart on the inside the lid? nor pretty ring, with an amorous posy? Nothing of that sort, which is pretty and not common, in your shop?

Mast. O yes, Sir! I have a pretty snuff-box here; on the inside of the lid, do you see, is a man of threescore and ten acting the lover, and hunting, like a boy, after gewgaws and trifles, to please a girl with.

O. M. Meaning me, Sir! Do you banter me, Sir?

Mast. If you take it to yourself, Sir, I can't help it.

O. M. And is a person of my years and gravity to be laugh'd at?

Mast. Why, really, Sir, years and gravity do make such childishness very ridiculous, I can't help owning. However, I am very sorry I have none of these curious trifles for your diversion; but I have delicate hobby-horses and rattles, if you please.

O. M. By all the charms of Araminta, I will revenge this affront.

[*Exit.*

Gent. Ha! ha! ha! How contemptible is rage in impotence!

potence! But pray, Sir, don't you think this kind of freedom with your customers detrimental to your trade?

Maft. No, no, Sir; the odd character I have acquired by this rough kind of fincerity and plain-dealing, together with the whimsical humour of moralizing upon every trifle I fell, are the things which, by raising people's curiosity, furnish me with all my customers: and it is only fools and coxcombs I am so free with.

La. And, in my opinion, you are in the right of it. Folly and impertinence ought always to be the objects of satire and ridicule.

Gent. Nay, upon second thoughts, I don't know but this odd turn of mind which you have given yourself may not only be entertaining to several of your customers, but perhaps very much so to yourself.

Maft. Vastly so, Sir. It very often helps me to speculations infinitely agreeable. I can sit behind this counter, and fancy my little shop, and the transactions of it, an agreeable representation of the grand theatre of the world. When I see a fool come in here, and throw away fifty or an hundred guineas for a trifle that is not really worth a shilling, I am surpris'd. But when I look out into the world, and see lordships and manors barter'd away for gilt coaches and equipage; an estate for a title; and an easy freedom in retirement for a servile attendance in a crowd; when I see health with eagerness exchanged for diseases, and happiness for a game at hazard; my wonder ceases. Surely the world is a great toy-shop, and all its inhabitants run mad for rattles. Nay, even the very wisest of us, however we may flatter ourselves, have some failing or weakness, some toy or trifle, that we are ridiculously fond of. Yet, so very partial are we to our own dear selves, that we overlook those miscarriages in our own conduct which we loudly exclaim against in that of others, and tho' the same fool's turbant fits us all.

You say that I, I say that you are he;

And each man swears, "The cap's not made for me."

Gent. Ha! ha! 'Tis very true indeed. But I imagine now you begin to think it time to shut up shop. Ladies, do you want any thing else?

La. No, I think not.—If you please to put up that
looking-

looking-glass, and the perspective, I will pay you for them.

Gent. Well, Madam, how do you like this whimsical humourist?

La. Why, really, in my opinion, the man's as great a curiosity himself as any thing he has got in his shop.

Gent. He is so, indeed.

In this gay, thoughtless age, h'as found a way,

In trifling things just morals to convey;

'Tis his at once to please, and to reform,

And give old satire a new pow'r to charm.

And, wou'd you guide your lives and actions right,

Think on the maxims you have heard to-night.

E P I L O G U E.

WELL, Heav'n be prais'd, this dull, grave sermon's done,
(For faith our author might have call'd it one.)

I wonder who the devil he thought to please!

Is this a time o' day for things like these?

Good sense and honest satire now offend;

We're grown too wise to learn, too proud to mend.

And so divinely wrapt in songs and tunes,

The next wise age will all be—fiddlers sons.

And did he think plain truth would favour find?

Ah! 'tis a sign he little knows mankind.

To please, he ought to have a song or dance,

The tune from *Italy*, the caper *France*:

These, these might charm—But hope to do't with sense!

Alas! alas! how vain is the pretence?

But tho' we told him,—Faith t'will ne'er do—

Poh, never fear, he cry'd; tho' grave, 'tis new:

The whim, perhaps, may please, if not the wit;

And tho' they don't approve, they may permit.

If neither this nor that will intercede,

Submissive bend, and thus for pardon plead.

“Ye gen'rous Few, to you our author sues,

“His first essay with candour to excuse,

“'T has faults he owns; but if they are but small,

“He hopes your kind applause will hide them all.”

1774-1780

